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**Collection:** Executive Secretariat, NSC: Country  
File: Records, 1981-1985  
**Folder Title:** Soviet Bloc Economic and Financial  
Situation Update: (03/25/1982) (1)  
**Box:** RAC Box 19

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# WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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**Collection Name** EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT, NSC: COUNTRY FILE

**Withdrawer**

KDB 8/24/2015

**File Folder** SOVIET BLOC ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION  
UPDATES (3/25/82) (1)

**FOIA**

F03-002/5

**Box Number** 19

SKINNER

101

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
168730	MEMO	N. BAILEY TO W. CLARK: SOVIET BLOC ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION UPDATE #15 <b>D 9/13/2013 CREST NLR-748-19-24-1-0</b>	4	3/25/1982	B1
168731	REPORT	RE POLAND (PP. 7-9 ONLY) <b>PAR 10/11/2010 CREST NLR-748-19-24-2-9</b>	3	ND	B1
168732	CABLE	222114Z MAR 82	1	3/22/1982	B1
168733	CABLE	231517Z MAR 82	1	3/23/1982	B1
168734	CABLE	RE SOVIET UNION	5	3/18/1982	B1
168735	CABLE	RE SOVIET UNION	2	3/16/1982	B1
168736	CABLE	182329Z MAR 82	1	3/18/1982	B1

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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168737	CABLE	181134Z MAR 82	1	3/18/1982	B1
168738	CABLE	201215Z MAR 82	1	3/20/1982	B1
168739	CABLE	RE SOVIET UNION	2	3/23/1982	B1
168740	CABLE	231523Z MAR 82	1	3/23/1982	B1
168741	CABLE		2	3/19/1982	B1
168742	CABLE		2	3/15/1982	B1

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NSC/S PROFILE

TOP SECRET/ CODEWORD

ID 8201896

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL  
OF CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S) RECEIVED 26 MAR 82 13

8/27/05 EOB

TO CLARK

FROM BAILEY

DOCDATE 25 MAR 82

KEYWORDS: ECONOMICS

USSR

SUBJECT: SOVIET BLOC ECONOMIC & FINANCIAL SITUATION UPDATE # 15

ACTION: FOR INFORMATION

DUE:

STATUS IX FILES

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

CLARK

COMMENTS

REF# LOG NSCIFID ( C / )

ACTION OFFICER (S)	ASSIGNED	ACTION REQUIRED	DUE	COPIES TO
<i>Pres</i>	<i>IP 4/3</i>	<i>info</i>		
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168731	REPORT  RE POLAND (PP. 7-9 ONLY)	3	ND	B1

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## The Cost of Soviet Assistance to Poland (U)

Moscow has sharply increased its economic assistance to Poland since the beginning of the Polish crisis in July 1980. The burden of providing this support is becoming increasingly onerous as the USSR's resource base shrinks and its hard currency position weakens. Last year, direct and indirect hard currency aid to Poland represented roughly 5 percent of Moscow's hard currency earnings. This cost will cause Moscow to place an even higher premium on achieving sufficient stability in Poland to allow a reduction in Soviet aid. The Soviet-Polish relation profits Warsaw the most in economic terms but provides Moscow with large political and strategic benefits.

25X1

### *The Assistance Record*

Soviet assistance to Poland now accounts for roughly one-fourth of Soviet economic support to all of Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> It consists largely of subsidized exports of oil and other materials. Planned precrisis support to Poland in 1980 (mostly in the form of price subsidies, especially for oil) amounted to roughly \$3 billion. Following the emergence of worker unrest at midyear, Warsaw was unable to live up to its export commitments, especially for coal, and the trade deficit quickly climbed to \$1.2 billion for the year. Moscow granted Poland about \$300 million in hard currency assistance, largely in the form of a rollover of earlier Soviet hard currency credits, to help mitigate the effects of the unrest. On balance, total assistance for 1980 hit an estimated \$4 billion, roughly twice the previous year's level.

Soviet assistance to Poland rose to an estimated \$6 billion in 1981. The growing gap between the price Moscow charges Poland for oil and world market prices accounted for a major portion of the increase.

<sup>1</sup> The costs calculated in this article include (a) conventional economic aid in the form of ruble credits to cover trade imbalances, (b) opportunity costs involved in charging "bargain prices" for exports and paying "premium prices" for imports, and (c) direct hard currency assistance in the form of credits and/or the rolling over of Polish hard currency debt to the USSR.

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The USSR charged Poland only about \$17 a barrel for its oil last year, or one-half the amount it was receiving for oil sold in the West. At the same time, Poland's trade deficit with the USSR rose to the equivalent of \$2 billion. Finally, the Soviets boosted direct hard currency help to \$1 billion, all in the first quarter of the year. This help included a financial grant of about \$200 million, credits for food purchases in the West worth another \$200 million, and rescheduling of the \$820 million hard currency debt owed the USSR in 1981. In addition, the Soviet Union agreed to postpone until 1985 all repayments on Poland's ruble debt.

25X1

### *The Situation in 1982*

A promise of substantial ruble credits for Poland in 1982 comes at a time when the USSR is trying to lessen the burden of providing economic support to Eastern Europe.<sup>2</sup> The military takeover last December, however, forced the USSR to modify its policy regarding economic support for Poland. While Moscow probably has not decided on the actual amounts of aid that will be required, Warsaw hopes the USSR will provide more rather than less support. In a protocol signed in early January, Moscow agreed to allow Poland to run a deficit of 1.2 billion rubles in their mutual trade in 1982. Although the amount is less than the 1.4-billion-ruble deficit the Soviets allowed in 1981, the agreement represents a major reversal from the negotiating stance that was being taken before martial law was imposed—that trade would be balanced.

25X1

<sup>2</sup> Soviet-East European trade growth had slowed markedly in real terms by the mid-1970s as Moscow curbed exports of oil and industrial materials. Not only did the USSR want to husband its resources, but it presumably also wished to limit assistance provided through subsidized export prices. Trade agreements for 1981-85 signed with East European countries in early 1981 called for a leveling-off of Soviet oil deliveries and little or no increase in exports of other industrial materials. Later in the year, Moscow reportedly informed the Czechoslovaks, East Germans, and Hungarians that their purchases of Soviet oil on concessionary terms would be reduced.

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25X1 Moscow has not yet indicated a willingness to provide Poland new direct hard currency assistance this year, but the need to prop up the new government may force its hand on the issue. Poland desperately needs Soviet funding for foodstuffs and essential industrial materials such as steel and chemicals—goods the USSR would be hard pressed to supply from domestic production. If Moscow were to completely fill these immediate needs, the hard currency could total \$2-3 billion in 1982 alone. Such expenditures on behalf of Poland could add as much as 10 percent to Moscow's hard currency outlays this year. The USSR would probably be less willing to cover a portion of the \$3 billion in interest and \$7 billion in principal payments due this year on Poland's hard currency debt to the West out of concern that such aid would not help provide goods for the Polish economy. The USSR's own emerging hard currency problems provide strong incentives for Moscow to hold down its assistance as much as possible.

25X1 Western reporters have been told by Soviet sources that during Jaruzelski's early March visit to Moscow the Soviets agreed to provide Poland with more aid than called for in the January protocol. The sources did not, however, indicate how much additional aid would be provided or what form it would take. We believe the Soviets will allow the Poles to run a 1982 trade deficit larger than called for in the January accord. Along with some likely hard currency assistance, the USSR could accelerate deliveries of Soviet goods. In any event, the offer probably falls well short of what the Poles were asking. The Soviets may attempt to make further aid contingent on Warsaw's continuing to pursue policies that Moscow approves and, thus, may dole out additional aid piecemeal.

#### *Economic Interdependencies*

25X1 Although the Soviets will want to minimize future support to Poland, providing too little could cause Poland's economy to collapse. Even without concessional aid, Warsaw is heavily dependent on Moscow for critical industrial materials, which it has purchased for the most part in exchange for goods not readily marketable in the West. Overall, roughly 40 percent of Poland's imports come from the USSR.

For several products, (notably oil, iron ore, and cotton), Soviet deliveries have become indispensable because Poland lacks the hard currency to buy Western substitutes. Without any foreign exchange in its coffers, Warsaw has ceased buying OPEC oil. Soviet crude oil now accounts for nearly all Polish consumption. In contrast, Poland was purchasing 25 percent of its oil in the West as recently as two years ago. Without Soviet oil, insurmountable transportation bottlenecks would occur. Petroleum accounts for over four-fifths of the energy used in the transportation sector. Since only a fraction of the railroad system is electrified, a cutoff of oil would halt the movement of most products within Poland. Given the small stocks of almost all vital raw materials, the impact on the economy would be instantaneous, far reaching, and paralyzing.

Warsaw, on the other hand, is not without leverage over Moscow. Poland's rail network and pipelines are critical to both the USSR and the CEMA economies. A breakdown in the transportation network between the USSR and Poland would place particular and immediate pressure on East Germany. It would, for instance, pose a logistical threat to the security of the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany. Alternate overland routes from the USSR simply are inadequate to transport the supplies normally shipped through Poland. The rail network in Czechoslovakia is already overburdened, regional road systems are poor, and there are shortages of trucks.

Moscow also would be hurt—albeit temporarily—by the cutoff of Polish deliveries that would result from a cessation of Soviet trade. Although Soviet dependence on imports from Poland is small, this trade can be helpful at the margin given the USSR's resource pinch. Of greatest importance to the USSR are Polish deliveries of sulphur, coking coal, and some transportation equipment. If Moscow were no longer to receive Polish sulphur—which accounts for about 7 percent of Soviet consumption—the USSR would have to turn to the West or do without. Doing without could jeopardize Soviet output of sulphuric acid and its derivatives, including nitrogenous fertilizers. (U)

Only 5 percent of the coking coal consumed in the USSR came from Poland prior to the cutbacks in deliveries in 1980-81, but Soviet steel mills located close to the border rely heavily on Polish coal. Current coal production difficulties in the Ukraine have compounded the problem for the Soviets. Moscow could mitigate the effects of disruptions from Polish deliveries by arranging to purchase coal and sulphur from the West in return for oil and other raw materials previously sent to Poland, but only over time.

25X

Moscow can exert strong economic pressure on Warsaw without cutting off aid. It could, for example, hold out the promise of sizable hard currency support for political good behavior. It could—and probably will—also make the granting of future ruble credits contingent on Polish good behavior. Moscow will have to balance its perception of what is necessary to keep Poland on the right track against the USSR's own deteriorating hard currency position in making decisions on assistance to Poland.

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168732	CABLE 222114Z MAR 82	1	3/22/1982	B1

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168733	CABLE 231517Z MAR 82	1	3/23/1982	B1

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168734	CABLE  RE SOVIET UNION	5	3/18/1982	B1

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168735	CABLE  RE SOVIET UNION	2	3/16/1982	B1

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168736	CABLE 182329Z MAR 82	1	3/18/1982	B1

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168738	CABLE  201215Z MAR 82	1	3/20/1982	B1

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168739	CABLE  RE SOVIET UNION	2	3/23/1982	B1

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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168740	CABLE 231523Z MAR 82	1	3/23/1982	B1

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168741	CABLE	2	3/19/1982	B1

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168742	CABLE	2	3/15/1982	B1

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

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